

IN THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete, marked up listing of revised claims with a status identifier in parentheses, underlined text indicating insertions, and strikethrough and/or double-bracketed text indicating deletions.

1. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor comprising
an elongate straight box girder having a first inner space with rails and a second elongate inner space comprising an endless driven drive element,
a drive carriage comprising a front carrier and a rear carrier which are arranged in a fixed spaced-apart relationship in the longitudinal direction of the girder and adapted to run on said rails,
each carrier being provided with at least one friction driver preloaded to be pressed towards engagement with the drive element so as to transfer drive to the drive carriage,
wherein each driver in its lower part has projecting portions adapted, in cooperation with a guide means, to be able to move the driver out of engagement with the drive element,
that the conveyor further comprises a fixedly arranged guide rail arranged to cooperate with the projecting portion of the rear carrier as the carrier passes the guide rail,
and
that the rear carrier is provided with a depressing means adapted to cooperate with the projecting portion of the front carrier, for the purpose of being able to accumulate a number of drive carriages in the girder system, along said rail.

2. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor according to claim 1, wherein said projecting portions of the drive, in the front carrier of a drive carriage, are formed as a ramp-shaped inclined drive plate, while said depressing means of the rear carrier are formed

as a rearwards projecting pressing roller which is adapted, in contact with the ramp-shaped driver plate of a subsequent drive carriage, to force its driver to be disconnected from the drive element.

3. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor according to claim 1, wherein said projecting portions of the driver, in the front carrier of a drive carriage, are provided with friction-reducing means, while said depressing means of the rear carrier are a ramp-shaped and inclined, and adapted, in contact with the projecting portions of a subsequent front carrier, to force its driver to be disconnected from the drive element.

4. (Currently Amended) An overhead conveyor according to claim 1, wherein the drive element has an essentially flat surface, and at least one driver is provided with an essentially flat upper surface, adapted to be brought into frictional engagement with the essentially flat surface of the drive element.

5. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor according to claim 1, wherein the girder system is made up of straight portions and curved portions, each curved portion having a second elongate inner space without a drive element, said curved girder portions being shorter than the distance between two carriers of the same drive carriage to allow a front carrier of a drive carriage, which is moved into a curved girder portion, to be moved by the engagement of the rear carrier with the drive element of the preceding straight girder portion, through the curved girder portion and into a subsequent straight girder portion and there come into engagement with the drive element in this subsequent girder portion.

6. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor according to claim 1, wherein switching points are connectable in the girder system, said switching points having a straight girder connectable to a first straight girder and provided with a space having rails for carriers which is movable away from the girder space with the drive element, and with a second curved girder portion which, during movement of the above-mentioned space, at the same time is positioned in contact with the first straight girder and with a subsequent curved girder portion.

7. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor according to claim 1, wherein the guide means is movable arranged to be able to actuate, manually or by remote control, the driver to perform disconnection of the drive for a carrier.

8. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor according to claim 1, wherein said guide rail is arranged to cooperate with a peripheral part of said projecting portions, while a depressing means is adapted to cooperate with an inner part of said projecting portions.

9. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor according to claim 1, wherein the drive element is provided with a number of through holes, and wherein each carrier is provided with a driver comprising a friction driver as well as movable pin adapted to be engaged with and disengaged from the holes in the drive element.

10. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor according to claim 1, wherein the drive element is a belt or a positive drive belt.

11. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor according to claim 10, wherein the drive belt is passed over drive and terminal rollers arranged close to the ends of the straight girder portions, and of which at least one driver roller is driven by a motor via a belt transmission.

12. (Previously Presented) An overhead conveyor as claimed in claim 11, wherein the driver motor is connectible to a drive roller, arranged at a distance therefrom, for a second drive belt by means of flexible shaft.